

Appl. No. 10/722,790
Amdt. dated 15 June 2006
Reply to OA of 16 March 2006

REMARKS

Status of the Claims:

Claims 1 to 34 are pending in the application. The independent claims are claims 1 and 17. The original claims are claims 3, 5 to 9, 11 to 12, 18 and 21. Claims 30 and 31 have been previously presented. The amended claims are claims 1, 2, 17, 19, 20, 22 and 29. Claims 4, 10, 13 to 16, 23 to 24, and 32 to 34 are canceled herein. Claims 25-28 were cancelled in an earlier amendment. New dependent claim 35 is first presented herein.

Support for the New Claim 35:

Support in the specification as filed for new dependent claim 35 may be found in paragraph [0054] and Table 1, as filed.

Claim Amendments:

In order to better define the invention claimed herein, the claims have been amended as follows:

Claim 1 has been amended to recite the step of introducing said aromatic hydrocarbon reactant and said alkylating agent into a reactor unit comprised of a first bed and a second bed downstream from said first bed, said first bed contains a first catalyst which comprises 65 wt.% ZSM-5 and 35 wt.% silica, and said second bed contains a second catalyst which comprises 65 wt.% ZSM-5 and 35 wt.% alumina. The support for this amendment in the specification as filed may be found in Examples 1 to 3 and paragraphs [0039], [0046] to [0052]. Examiner's rejection of the recitation to "catalytic activity" in claim 17 is now moot.

Claim 2 has been amended to recite a "reactor unit" in place of a "reaction zone". The antecedent basis for "reactor unit" may be found in claim 1, as filed.

Claim 17 has been amended to recite the step of providing a multi-stage alkylation reaction zone having a plurality of series-connected catalyst beds, at least one of the series-connected catalyst beds contains a first catalyst which comprises 65 wt.% ZSM-5 and 35 wt.% silica, and at least one downstream catalyst bed contains a second catalyst which comprises 65 wt.% ZSM-5 and 35 wt.% alumina. The support in the specification as filed may be found in claim 17, as filed, and Examples 1 to 3 and paragraphs [0039], [0046] to [0052]. Examiner's

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rejection of the recitation to the arrangement/sequence of the first and second catalyst is now moot.

Claims 19, 20 and 22 has been amended to recite "ZSM-5" in place of "zeolite" in order to have proper antecedent basis from claim 17, as amended herein.

Claim 29 has been amended to recite "first catalyst" in place of "first alkylation catalyst" in order to have proper antecedent basis from claim 17, as amended herein. Also, claim 29 has been amended to delete reference to a "silica binder" which is now recited in claim 17, from which claim 29 depends.

Claim Rejections

Applicant submits that the amendment to the claims provided herein have overcome Examiner's under 35 USC 112 and 35 USC 103, and that further argument for the patentability of the claims, as amended herein, are deemed premature.

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CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully request entry of the present amendment, consideration of the present remarks and a favorable action on allowability of the present application. It is submitted that the presently amended and new claims particularly point out and distinctly claim a novel, unobvious and useful process for manufacture of alkylaromatic compounds that meets the requirements for patentability.

In the event that the Examiner believes there are any outstanding issues in the way of allowance of this application, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner telephone the undersigned for discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

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